



# Montana Grain Growers Association

## 2023 Montana Legislative Update – Week 4

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**January 27, 2023**

And just like that we've wrapped up the fourth week of the session. Our top two priorities in Helena this week were the Montana Ag Experiment Station (MAES) and the confirmation hearing for the Director of the Department of Agriculture.

Past President Koch serves on the Montana Ag Experiment Station Advisory Council and represents Montana Grain Growers Association as well as serves as the Chair for the Advisory Board. On Monday, the MAES Budget hearing was in the Joint Education Subcommittee. Tryg shared his producer insight on how the experiment stations directly impact farms and operations across the state. Highlighting the reality of input costs, employee retention challenges and sharing the success of the work the Northwestern Ag Experiment Station accomplished with the Orange Wheat Blossom Midge.

On Thursday, President Keane testified in the Senate Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation Committee in support of Christy Clark's confirmation to serve as the Director of Agriculture. The committee passed the confirmation out of committee and it now heads to the Senate floor for a full vote.





**Upcoming:**

[HB 2 - General Appropriations Act](#)

*Sponsored by: Llew Jones*

*Many joint subcommittee hearings will take place throughout the week*

[HB 93 - Eliminate noxious weed seed free forage advisory council](#)

Revises laws related to noxious weed management; eliminates the noxious weed advisory council and transfers duties to the noxious weed management advisory council

*Sponsored by: Paul Green*

*Tuesday, January 31*

*House Agriculture*

[HB 94 - Repeal Montana huckleberry products law](#)

Repeals the Montana huckleberry filing laws

*Sponsored by: Paul Green*

*Tuesday, January 31*

*House Agriculture*

[SB 202 - Generally revise the Montana Local Food Choice Act](#)

Clarifies exemptions for producers of homemade food or homemade food products

*Sponsored by: Greg Hertz*

*Monday, January 30*

*Senate Public Health, Welfare & Safety*

**Waiting for Committee Executive Action:**

[SB 47 - Revise commercial drivers license laws to comply with federal requirements](#)

Revises commercial driver's license law to comply with federal requirements; requires the Department of Justice to query the entry level driver training provider registry and the commercial drug and alcohol clearinghouse under certain conditions

*Sponsored by: Theresa Manzella*

*Wednesday, January 11*

*Senate Judiciary*

[SB 126 - Provide funding for Montana State Fund](#)

*Sponsored by: Greg Hertz*

*Thursday, January 12*

*Senate Finance & Claims*

**Referred to Committee:**

[HB 129 - Revise fees for special mobile equipment](#)

Revises laws related to special mobile equipment exemptions and identification decals

*Sponsored by: Tom Welch*

*Wednesday, January 25*

[SB 28 - Provide funding for conservation districts](#)

Transfers tax revenue from marijuana sales to the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation for grants to conservation districts

*Sponsored by: Mike Lang*

*Friday, January 13*

**Draft Taken off Hold, or to Requester for Review, or Ready for Delivery:**

[LC0178 - Generally revise agriculture laws](#)

*Sponsored by: Joshua Kassmier*

*Tuesday, January 24*

[LC2347 - Generally revise right to repair laws](#)

*Sponsored by: Willis Curdy*

*Friday, January 13*

[LC2480 - Generally revise the MT wheat & barley checkoff program](#)

*Sponsored by: Ross Fitzgerald*

*Monday, January 16*

**Bill Drafts of Great Interest:**

[LC2048 - Constitutional amendment to enshrine right to farm and ranch](#)

*Sponsored by: Caleb Hinkle*

[LC3057 - Increase funding for Montana agricultural experiment stations](#)

*Sponsored by: Russel Miner*

[LC4060 - Generally revise MAES & MSU budgets](#)

*Sponsored by: Ross Fitzgerald*

For more information:

- [Primary Preference List](#)
- [MGGA State Legislature Home Page](#)
- [House Ag Committee Hearing](#)
- [Senate Ag Committee Hearing](#)



**How To Have Your Say Virtually! There are new ways to participate with new remote capabilities!**

#### [Request To Testify Remotely/Upload Your Testimony](#)

- You will be able to select from the bills that are currently scheduled for hearing for the next 3 days.
- By 5PM the day before the hearing, you will be able to submit your written testimony, write a brief message, or request a Zoom link to testify in the bill hearing.
- Fill out the form with the pertinent details and submit. You will receive an email confirmation.
- You do not have to testify in order to submit written comments. Written comments received by the deadline will be distributed to all committee members. However, if you request a Zoom link, we request that you write a brief message in the event of technical difficulties so that your name will be entered into the record.
- If you wish to submit written testimony after the 5PM deadline please call the Information Desk at (406) 444-4800 for assistance
- Rules of decorum must be followed, and the Presiding Officer will call on you when it is your turn to speak. Follow the Zoom directions and raise your hand to let the Remote Committee Coordinator know when you want to speak. We will not assume that because you requested the Zoom link that you automatically want to testify. There may be limits placed on how many people are allowed to testify remotely on each bill.

**Traditional ways of accessing the Legislature are still available**

#### Website Messages

- [Send messages through the website](#): you can send a web message to a single legislator or to a committee at anytime using a web form.

### Phone Messages

- Call (406) 444-4800 and your message will be delivered to a legislator.

### Attend committee hearings

- The public will be allowed to attend hearings at the capitol, but because of social distancing, you may only be allowed in the room when it is your time to testify and may not be able to stay in the room. We ask that you wear a mask or face covering in the Capitol Building and in hearing rooms.

### Watch/Listen

- [Watch or listen to committee hearings](#): All committee meetings will have a video-stream link and an audio-stream link so you can observe a committee meeting live or watch the archive of the hearing.

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### Contact us:

- [Your district director](#)
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